

One Quarter Of Florida Residents Lack Health Coverage, Report Says

by Medical-News-Today

One in four Florida residents younger than age 65 is uninsured, and the number of uninsured Florida residents of all ages increased by 38% over the past eight years, according to a report recently released by the Florida Health Insurance Advisory Board, the Miami Herald reports. According to the report, based on U.S. Census data, there are about 3.8 million uninsured residents in Florida. However, the report found that the number of people enrolled in private insurance plans increased from 2005 to 2006. Florida Insurance Commissioner Kevin McCarty and a panel he heads on Friday will consider whether to recommend to the state Legislature sweeping changes to reduce the number of uninsured residents. Recommendations could include mandating that college students show proof of health insurance, expanding the state's Healthy Kids program, creating a state-funded pilot program to fund insurance for low-income families, increasing the use of limited-benefits health insurance plans and allowing dependents to remain on their parents' insurance up to age 30. Members of the Legislature said they were unsure whether they would endorse the recommendations, and a spokesperson for Gov. Charlie Crist (R) would not say whether the governor would endorse them. The Florida Agency for Health Care Administration also is studying the issue and plans to make recommendations (Fineout, Miami Herald, 11/1).

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